

From the Editors

David R. Bauer

We might affix the label “convergence” to this issue of the *Journal*, since the four articles that appear here have in common the forging of connections between inductive biblical study and related areas of biblical and ministerial scholarship.

First, Suzanne Nicholson, who has devoted her professional career to the teaching of Bible to undergraduate students, explores the relationship between inductive biblical study and narrative criticism. Her thesis is clear and compelling: Narrative criticism has much in common with the inductive study of the Scriptures and therefore should be embraced as a methodological partner with inductive Bible study. Of course, insofar as inductive Bible study seeks to be a holistic and synthetic approach that allows for the incorporation of every legitimate method, narrative criticism may naturally be included within the inductive study of the Bible. Yet Professor Nicholson’s article not only argues that inductive Bible study should incorporate insights of narrative criticism but suggests also that narrative critics should take seriously into account elements typically associated with inductive biblical studies. In the process of arguing her case, Professor Nicholson offers both a helpful introductory description of narrative criticism, and also one of the most specific and detailed narrative-critical examinations of Acts 15 that one is likely to find anywhere.

This issue includes the final two chapters of the book, *The Resurrection Body*, by Wilbert W. White, the founder of The Biblical Seminary in New York and one of the pioneers of the inductive Bible study movement. (The earlier chapters appeared in previous issues of the *Journal*.) Even as Professor Nicholson relates inductive biblical study

to narrative criticism, so Dr. White employs an inductive study of the Bible, and particularly the New Testament, to address the historical-critical issue of the credibility of the bodily resurrection of Jesus. Dr. White argues against Professor Adolf von Harnack's separation of the Easter message from the Easter faith. Many have followed Professor Harnack in insisting that while Christians must affirm the Easter faith that Jesus is alive, they cannot with intellectual honesty accept the Christian message that Jesus was actually raised from the dead and appeared in bodily form. Professor White demonstrates from a careful analysis of relevant texts that the earliest Church believed that Jesus was thus raised and that the structure of the New Testament witness requires that the Easter faith be based upon the Easter message and cannot exist without it. He insists that when we take seriously the testimonial evidence, we will find that it is more reasonable to accept this Easter message than to reject it. Thus, Professor White employs inductive study to understand the New Testament claims (interpretation) and to assess their validity and significance (evaluation and application).

Finally, Dorothy Jean Weaver, Emerita Professor of New Testament at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, contributes an article in the series, "From Inductive Study to Proclamation." This series recalls that the earliest Christian commentary on the Scriptures was for the most part preaching, or sermons, and thus demonstrates how the preaching task itself has a unique capacity to illumine the meaning of biblical passages as well as relate the message of these passages directly to the concerns and needs of congregations. Professor Weaver "pulls back the curtain" of her own analysis of and reflections upon Luke 10:38–42, in which she emphasizes that the interpretation of this passage is unlocked especially by considering its role within its broader-book context and demonstrates that attention to the proclamatory potential of this passage can actually illumine aspects of the meaning of this text. She presents the homiletic results of her work in a fresh and insightful sermon, which compellingly challenges the typical way this familiar passage that portrays the sisters Mary and Martha has been understood and applied.



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